

The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 8 October 1968



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THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
8 OCTOBER 1968

1. South Vietnam

Interior Minister Khiem is apprehensive about fresh reports of coup plotting. Thieu, he says, shares this anxiety.

Khiem told Ambassador Berger yesterday that six or so junior officers are being investigated in connection with the present reports. Khiem said the plotters are implying that Ky supports them.

There is no evidence that such powerful figures as Ky are involved. Thieu, however, takes rumors of intrigue seriously. He knows his attitudes on peace and postwar political competition are ahead of some of his colleagues who consider him too responsive to American influence. Under these circumstances, Thieu can be expected to examine carefully any coup reports--even those involving a small group of junior officers.

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2. Mexico

A temporary truce may follow last night's decision by student leaders to suspend mass rallies. If observed, this ban will smooth things out for the Olympics, but the students by no means have given up, and any armistice will be uneasy at best.

The government has not abandoned its charges that leftists are responsible for the disorders. Some [redacted] [redacted] however, are saying the students' principal assistance is coming from enemies of Diaz Ordaz in his own party.

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Meanwhile, in Veracruz, the Cuban consul is spreading rumors that the US is behind the trouble and hopes to use it as a pretext for military intervention.

3. Peru

Stresses are appearing in the new military government. The services are bickering over government appointments. The plans for the coup appear to have been better than the plans for how to govern afterward.

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4. Laos

The rainy season is coming to a close and, if the pattern of past years is followed, it will be the Communists' turn to begin offensive probing. Their strength is greater now than at any time since 1963. Government forces made some modest gains during their traditional wet season campaign, but there were no major changes this summer in the real estate held by the two sides.

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5. Turkey

Leftist students are busily organizing a new anti-Western campaign to coincide with the opening of the universities early next month. The US, NATO, and the Demirel regime will be the main targets. There are indications that the students are getting some help from foreign Communist sources. Clashes with rightist students and the security forces are almost a foregone conclusion.

6. West Germany - France

The Kiesinger - De Gaulle meetings of 27-28 September left the Germans quite discouraged over the future of relations with France. De Gaulle

_____ would make no firm pledge to back West Germany in event of attack, and the Germans sense France is withdrawing from international commitments across the board. The US Embassy believes Bonn may now give priority to its own defense needs and put relations with the US ahead of those with France.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of U S
Political Attitudes



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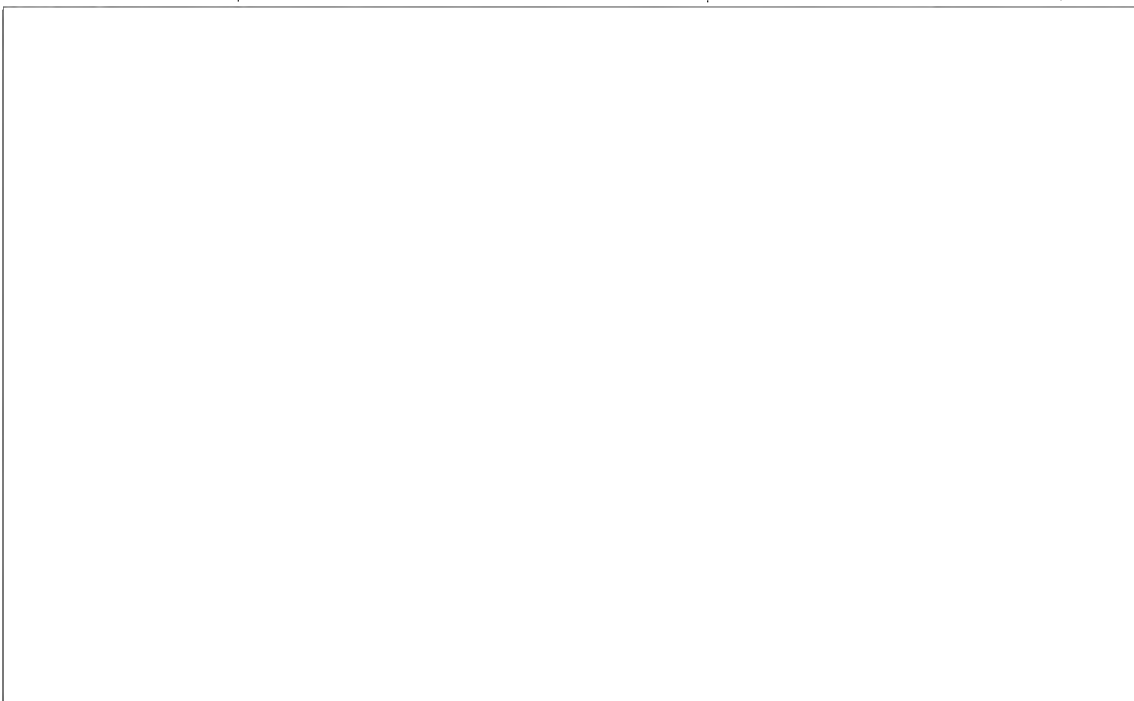
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8 October 1968

Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION



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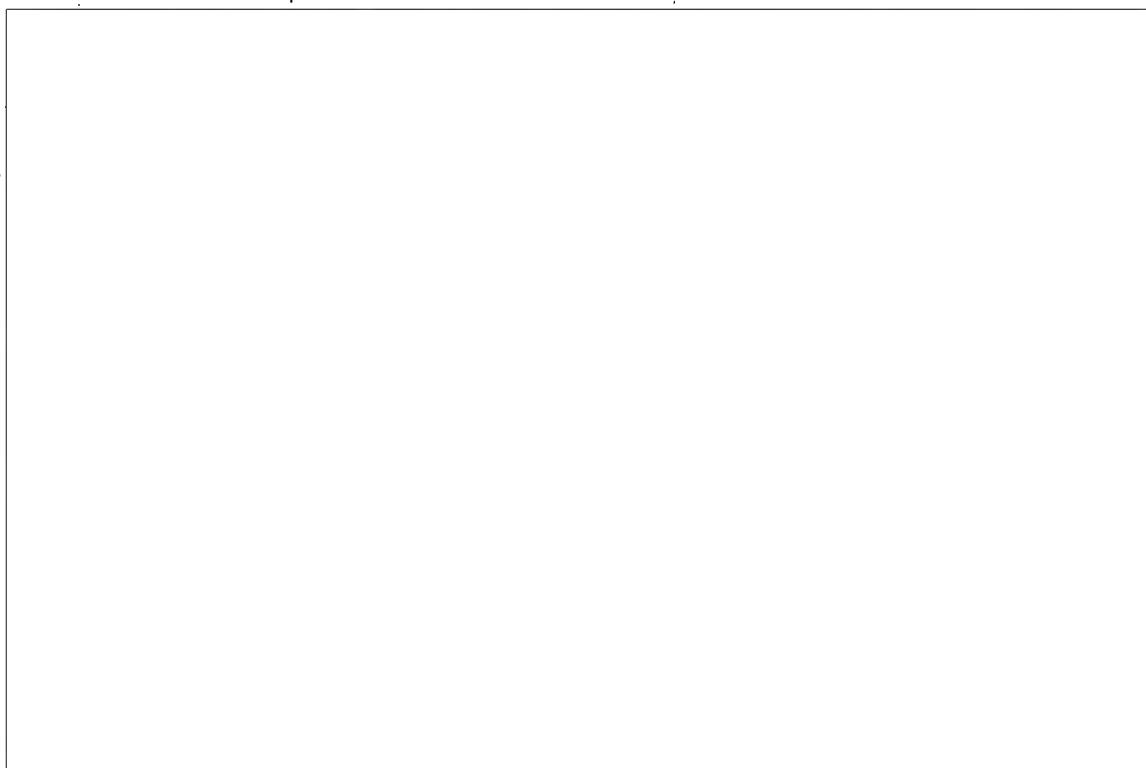
Fatherland Front Reactivated: Hanoi is dragging its main mass organization, the Fatherland Front, out of moth balls. The Front has had little publicity and even less responsibility in the past few years, but the Communists appear to be turning to it more frequently in the past few months in an effort to generate increasing popular support for regime objectives.

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Full coverage of a new "enlarged 16th congress" of the Front was given over the domestic radio on 6 October. The party sent politburo member Truong Chinh to give the pep talk, and he succeeded in getting the group to pledge renewed efforts to help mobilize the people for "support of the South and defense of the North." The Front offered to bend its best efforts toward educating the people in the proper political views and spurring them on to greater military and economic feats.

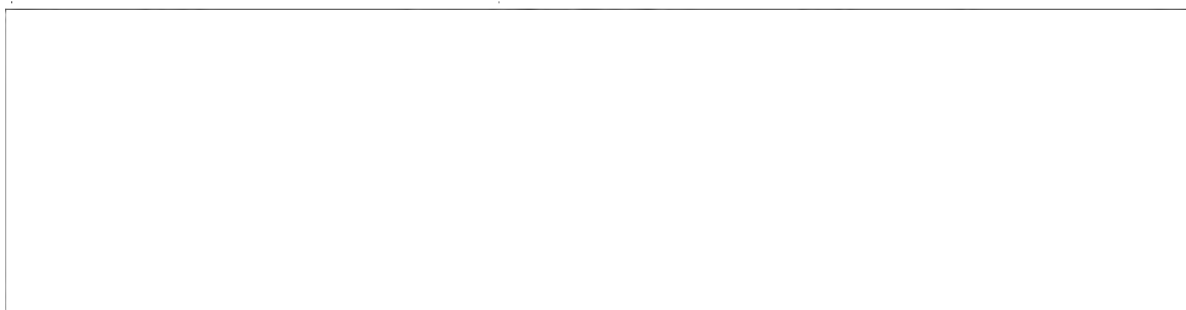
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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

There is nothing of significance to report to-day.

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